"It's the economy, stupid!"

Posted on 9 September 2011

"It's the economy, stupid!" is a political catch phrase that was made popular during the Clinton Administration in the United States during the 1990s. While it has generally been used to emphasise the importance of economic performance in the outcome of elections, it also highlights the fundamental importance of the economy to the progress of a nation.

Economic growth, especially a growing GDP has, at times, been taken to imply an improvement in overall national progress and wellbeing. However, national progress needs to take into account other facets of life, such as the health of the people and the state of the environment, since these aspects are not captured in traditional economic measures of progress such as GDP.

There is a growing international and national push to come up with progress measures that are 'beyond GDP' and this consultation is about finding out what other aspects we should look at - in other words, what aspects of life are important to Australians for national progress?

What do you think about the move to go beyond GDP for measuring progress? What other aspects of life could be taken into account when looking at national progress?

(Serhat, MAP Team)

Return to Home

Comments

#1 cdbragg
9/09/2011 4:27:15 PM It's the economy, stupid!

Yes... of course we need to look beyond the simplistic GDP as a measure of progress.

I wonder if there was some way of creating an index that factored in both economic growth, job satisfaction, disposable income levels, leisure and recreation time, general mental wellbeing... and I'm not sure what else.

Sometimes, I wonder if people don't "feel" better off even when some of those indicators say they should because of the messages they get about needing more and more stuff, along with bigger and bigger houses, etc.

Perhaps the index could have some inverse factors that somehow include the pressure people feel to conform, consume or comply?

Good on you ABS for asking the question.

#2 Justin Turner
19/09/2011 10:07:05 PM It's the economy, stupid!

Hi guys,

I agree that there are limitations to GDP as a measure of progress, although I would never suggest actually disposing of it.

One of the things that bothers me, from a material economic point of view, are metrics for superannuation, managed funds and hedge funds. Superannuation is a private (compulsory) system to fund people's retirement, potentially some 30% of their lifetimes, yet the data provided by the ABS is as comprehensive as it is for the banking system. Managed funds (including hedge funds) are also growing rapidly (mostly due to compulsory

What is MAP 2.0 all About?

Search

Search this Blog

Recent Entries

The consultation continues...

Our last regular blog post

Blog contributions

Recent Comments

Towards Q2: Tomorrow&

'Things that matter

'Things that matter

Archive

November 2011 (4)

October 2011 (13)

September 2011 (91)

August 2011 (6)

July 2011 (1)

April 2011 (3)

super), and will surpass the banking system as the primary financial asset allocation system in 5-10 years. Yet, the data for these is not particularly granular either. What do I mean by granular? I mean, there are no clear breakdowns by asset class (e.g. listed shares, unlisted shares, property, cash, fixed and floating income, etc), breakdowns by strategy (buy and hold, alpha investing, momentum investing, duration plays, etc), statistics about what asset classes or strategies different asset managers invest in. This kind of data could be provided on a fund manager level.

In terms of what I'd like published to compliment the GDP measure, probably quite a few I think the ABS already collects or can easily obtain, but they don't receive much political airtime. For example, weekly hours of leisure and productivity improvements (i.e. can we work less but earn the same?), median measures of hours lost in commutes, measures of work satisfaction, measures of leisure satisfaction...

Thanks guys, and keep up the good work!

Subject:

It's the economy, stupid!

Name:

Email:

Add Comment:

© Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011 All Rights Reserved | Privacy Policy | Disclamer and Terms of Use | Contact Us